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## ABSTRACT

The 1987-88 dissemination program for REPLAN (the British program to promote educational opportunities for unemployed adults) is described; examples of good practice are identified; and suggestions for future dissemination activities are offered. The advice is intended for those who develop staff and curriculum for unemployed adults, and it concerns each of the four levels of curriculum dissemination previously identified by the program. Those levels are: giving straightforward information; raising awareness of problems; analyzing local problems; and identifying solutions. Under a heading for each level of dissemination, a successful dissemination strategy is summarized and then followed by an example and a comment that elaborates on the conditions under which the strategy was successful. A final section of the document gives conclusions and recommendations. The following recommendations are offered: plan collaboratively; plan activities that involve participants; use systematic evaluation, including follow-up; and continue support for the outcomes of dissemination programs. (CML)

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As part of the DES REPLAN programme to promote the development of educational opportunities for the adult unemployed, the Further Education Unit (FEU) funds a series of curriculum development projects and a related annual dissemination programme. Over the five-year period of REPLAN, there have been 44 FEU REPLAN projects. The dissemination programme is funded by FEU in order to raise awareness of the project outcomes and to enable project findings to be applied in a local context. The programme is therefore intended to be essentially a staff development exercise.

This bulletin is an outcome of the dissemination programme for 1987/88. Examples of good practice in terms of the aims, process, context, outcomes and evaluation of dissemination programmes are identified and suggestions made for future activities. The bulletin should be useful to those engaged in staff and curriculum development for the adult unemployed.

#### The dissemination programme

The 1987/88 dissemination programme aimed to raised awareness of the following outcomes of FEU REPLAN projects: *Anxious to Work* (1987), *Listening to You* . . . *Listening to Us* (1987), *Supporting Restart?* (1987), *Opening Doors* (1987), *Retraining Adults* (1986) *The CCPR Community Sports Leaders Awards* (1986), *Training for the Self-Catering Industry* (1988) and *Adult Unemployment and the Curriculum* (1985). Regional Advisory Councils for Further Education, further and higher education institutions and local authorities bid for funding for staff development activities. Eighteen proposals were accepted and some 600 people attended the events.

Four levels of curriculum dissemination have been identified (*Loud and Clear - A Study of Curriculum Dissemination in Further and Higher Education* FEU, 1980):

- Level 1: giving straightforward information about project reports and their contents;
- Level 2: raising awareness of the problems, leading to an understanding of them;
- Level 3: local analysis of the problems to find ways of tackling them;
- Level 4: identification of solutions to problems.



## REPLAN in Action

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This framework was used by Bullivant Associates to analyse both the 1986/7 and 1987/8 FEU REPLAN dissemination programmes (RPs421 and 482) and is used to structure this account of the 1987/8 programme.

#### Level 1 — giving information

##### Summary

One or more of the project reports listed above were distributed to participants on all the dissemination programmes. However, information was more readily accepted when summaries of reports were used. Checklists, such as the one to be found in *Adult Unemployment and the Curriculum*, were a particularly useful way of giving information.

##### Example

Pre-conference planning in one Authority included the use of a checklist by a representative of each college in the area to monitor the current state of developments of provision for the adult unemployed.

##### Comment

The circulation of publications, particularly full project reports, is a basic form of information giving. Information tends to be more widely used if presented as a summary or checklist which can be easily applied to a local context.

#### Level 2 — awareness of problems

##### Summary

Many dissemination events focused on awareness raising as an aim and co-ordinators often invited speakers for particular projects to identify problems they had faced and explain how these had been overcome. Bringing together participants from a variety of agencies also served, in some dissemination events, to broaden perceptions of the issues and to enable approaches to be shared.

##### Example

In one Authority senior representatives concerned with leisure provision were invited from adult and further education, the careers service, the leisure and recreation departments, the Sports Council and private industry. The approach to the FEU reports *The CCPR Community Sports Leaders Award* and *Training for the Self Catering Industry* was based on workshops and case studies, with an emphasis on identifying practical solutions to problems and formulating co-operative plans for the development of a wider range of course and job opportunities for unemployed people in leisure and recreation.

##### Comment

Awareness raising appears to have been most successfully achieved where participants were involved in experiential approaches using members of projects teams as speakers and a structure of case studies and workshops. Involvement of a variety of agencies also increased levels of awareness and led to collaborative developments.

#### Level 3 — analysis of local problems

##### Summary

In some dissemination events co-ordinators planned to include an analysis of local problems. In most cases this was achieved by preliminary work leading to the use of the dissemination event to develop action plans.

##### Example

One Authority, concentrating on the report, *Opening Doors* involved participants in the identification of 37 indicators of an 'open door' in institutions and looked at case studies, including *Anxious to Work*. It was decided that:

- one group should research all local courses that offered improved access to unemployed adults;
- one group would promote outreach with the unemployed and educational guidance for adults to improve take-up of places;
- one group would analyse part time students' course experience, including 'drop-out'.

## Comment

About half the dissemination events achieved some analysis of local problems in relation to FEU REPLAN project reports. In order to do this, careful planning, needs analysis and targeting was necessary.

### Level 4 — identification of solutions to problems

## Summary

Although about half the dissemination events produced action plans related to local situations, there was less evidence of the solutions to problems being achieved. This may be partly due to the lack of follow-up evaluation over a long period. However, there is some evidence of sustained activity which resulted from dissemination events. In some instances, this has been policy development and, in others, curriculum and institutional development.

## Example

In one Region the dissemination event was aimed at those agencies working, or wishing to work, with the adult unemployed in rural areas. The intention was to evaluate *Adult Unemployment and the Curriculum* with a view to producing a strategy for education and training opportunities in the context of the rural economy of the region. The event included information-giving sessions and workshops on various case studies of good practice.

The conclusions from the event were that an effective strategy for education and training in rural areas should:

- initiate a research and development tradition (village appraisals, skills audit, community audits, etc.);
- develop very carefully targeted provision (client groups, geographic areas);
- encourage co-operative and collaborative links between agencies (networking);
- develop outreach delivery mechanisms;
- develop support structures (e.g. transport, child care, local learning clubs).

Action as a result of the dissemination event included:

- the development of a regional rural advisory group;
- the development of a regional action research programme;
- a newsletter including examples of good practice from the region;
- a staff development checklist for INSET co-ordinators;
- guidelines on fund raising in rural areas.

## Comment

The identification of solutions to problems did occur at some dissemination events. However, in order to ensure that solutions are implemented, the evaluation of events should include follow-up.

### Conclusions and recommendations

The evaluation of the dissemination programme concluded that events had increased awareness of the problems facing unemployed people and the action needed to improve provision for their education and training or to facilitate access to existing provision. In particular the events provided an opportunity to bring together people from different institutions and agencies working with the unemployed and to encourage the development of collaborative networks.

Recommendations for future dissemination programmes included:

- collaborative planning;
- planning events with activities which involve participants, i.e. applying research and development project findings to the local situation;
- systematic evaluation including follow-up;
- continuing support for the implementation of the outcomes of dissemination programmes.

For further copies of this bulletin, or for details of the availability of FEU publications, contact the FEU Information Centre, 2 Orange Street, London WC2H 7WE, tel: 01-321 0433 ext. 256. For more information about FEU REPLAN work, contact Elizabeth Weightman at FEU (ext. 273).

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